



# ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 51, Georgetown, Ontario, Canada L7G 4T1  
[www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca)

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March - April 2009

## 150 Years of Education in Stewarttown's Schools

On October 25, 2008, Stewarttown School celebrated 50 years of education in the current facility. The anniversary reunion was well attended by five decades of former students and dozens of current and former teachers. There were rooms full of photos and artifacts representing those fifty years. But the education of children at Stewarttown began long before this, more than one hundred and fifty years ago.

The earliest settlers arrived in Stewarttown in 1820 and were welcomed by the seemingly insurmountable task of clearing the ancient forests. Education of the pioneer children was not of primary importance at that time. However, it was not long (1830's - 1840's) before the settlers built the first log school house. The early record book of 1855 refers to this early school house as well as the construction of a subsequent school house.

During the middle decades of the 1800's, new directions in



education were promoted by the relentless efforts of Egerton Ryerson with the assistance of the provincial government. By 1871 public education was established throughout the province and funded by the property tax. As a result, a new era of school house

construction began. Stewarttown's trustees hired local builder, Henry Tost, to erect a two story red brick school house in 1873, located on the Fifteen Sideroad behind the Anglican church. The school house evolved over the years. The second story was removed in the 1890's, chemical toilets installed in the 1920's and hydro electricity installed in 1940.



When increasing enrolment necessitated a larger facility, the Esquesing School Area #1 board closed the one-room school in 1958 to make way for the new five room consolidated school. The school was enlarged and transformed three

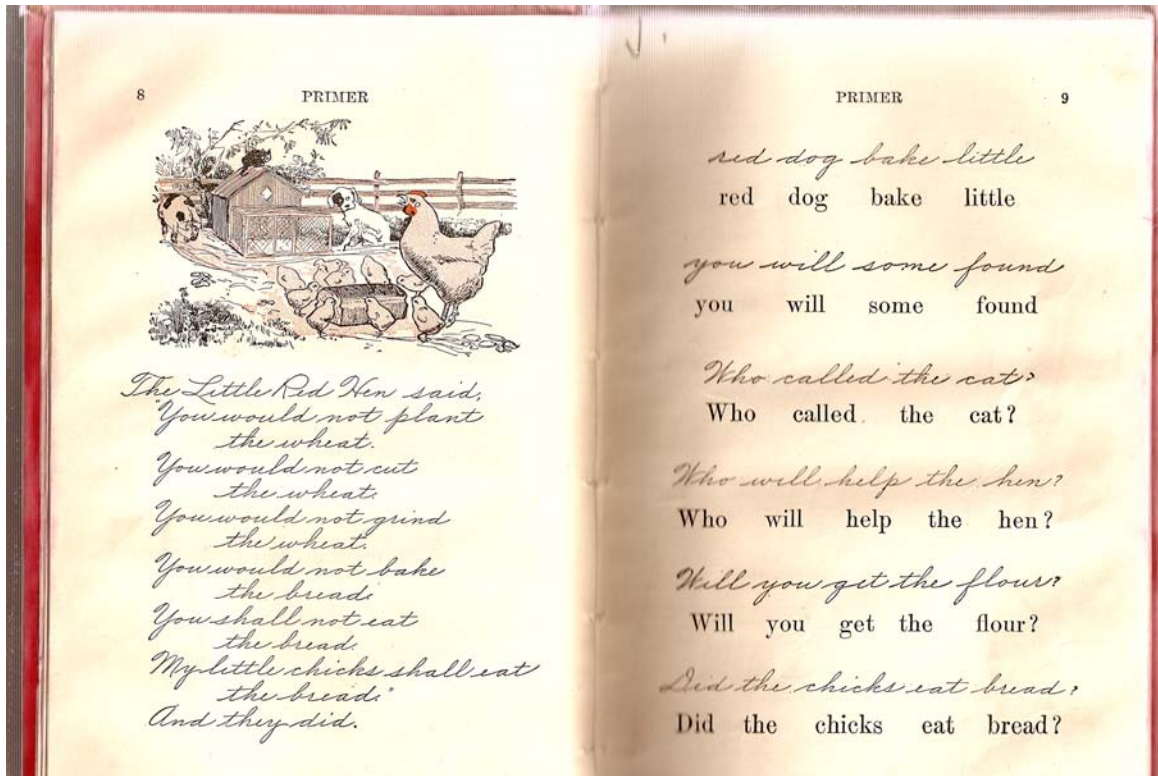
times during the next thirty years with the addition of classrooms, gymnasiums, libraries and the change from eight grades to a senior school (grades 7&8) and finally to a middle school with the addition of grade six in 1986.

There were many changes in curriculum during this time. From 1915 to 1940 there was a strong emphasis placed on introducing and promoting agricultural advancements to the rural population through the establishment of school fairs. Young students would compete with other nearby one-room schools in various categories such as

**1923 school fair -**  
visiting students from Waterloo School, line up for photo and the school cheer.



livestock, vegetables, field crops as well as public speaking, music and art. In 1967 Stewarttown School introduced home economics, industrial arts and gymnasium sports. Full instrumental music was begun in 1987. In the 1990's the World Wide Web was introduced to Stewarttown students, opening a window to the present world as well as a window to our past at [www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca).



The easiest way to view the changes in society's values and knowledge is to peruse through some of the readers from the "really old books" to the primer of the 1920's -1940's, to Dick, Jane and Sally of the 1940's-1950's to the readers of the last fifty years. Likewise, mathematics books show how skills and requirements have evolved from long columns of addition and subtraction and math drill to data management and probability and the use of calculators. But the best way to learn about Stewarttown Schools' evolution is to view the photos on March 11, 2009 at Stewarttown School.

**-Ray Denny**

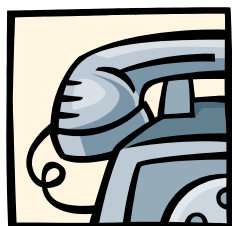


## **ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2009**

- Wed. 11 March 2009     **Stewarttown School History** - Although Stewarttown School just celebrated 50 years, the history of the institution extends far beyond the current building. EHS member Ray Denny will share his history of Stewarttown School .  
STEWARTTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL, 15 Sideroad & Trafalgar Road,  
Stewarttown, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. 8 April 2009     **Esquesing Before the Plough** – Amateur archaeologist and musician Don Ablett will share his findings on the Huron peoples who lived in this area and will entertain us with his ballad, “Whisper in the wind”. Mark Rowe will complete the story of the native peoples by explaining everyday life for the Mississauga peoples.  
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Main & Church St., Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. 13 May 2009     **The Exploitation of the Dionne Quintuplets** – It is with delight that we welcome back Donald Zaldin to speak to the EHS on the Dionne quintuplets who were born 75 years ago. In this age of multiple births hear the story and sensationalism generated by this mile stone in modern medicine.  
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Main & Church St., Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. 10 June 2009     **St. Stephen’s Community History** - Ken Whaley will speak about the community of St. Stephen’s Church at Hornby and will lead a short walk about of the cemetery. This will be preceded by our annual pot luck dinner. Everyone is welcome to attend. Bring your selected dish with your own plate and cutlery. Coffee and tea will be available.  
ST. STEPHEN’S ANGLICAN CHURCH, Steeles Ave. at 9<sup>th</sup> Line, Hornby, Dinner @ 6 p.m.; Meeting @ 7:15 p.m.

**ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE!**

Refreshments served from 7:00 p.m.



Stephen Blake	905 877-8251	President
Karen Hunter	905 838-2109	Treasurer
Dawn Livingstone	905 877-6506	Secretary
Sherry Westfahl	905 873-7145	Past - President
J. Mark Rowe	905 877-9510	Archivist
Jan Raymond	905 877-9172	Publications
Marj Allan	905 877-9985	Membership
Cathy Hunt		Social

## *Society Notes*

### **INTERNET CONNECTIONS**

The Esquesing Historical Society has an official web site on the World Wide Web. <[www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca)>

Send your e-mail to [mrowe6@sympatico.ca](mailto:mrowe6@sympatico.ca) or [dawn.livingstone@sympatico.ca](mailto:dawn.livingstone@sympatico.ca)

### **EHS NEWSLETTER**

John Mark Rowe prepared this newsletter with assistance from Karen Hunter and Dawn Livingstone. Submissions welcome.

You may opt to receive your newsletter sent electronically to an e-mail address you provide.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Our 2008 paid memberships was 119. The individual membership rate is \$10. The family or institution rate is \$12. Cheques payable to the Society can be mailed to our post box. Membership runs until February, now is the time to renewal for 2009. This will be your last newsletter if you do not renew. Marj Allen, membership secretary, will accept your 2009 fee at the meetings.

### **ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO**

[www.archives.gov.on.ca](http://www.archives.gov.on.ca)

The new facility will open in April 2009 at York University.

### **HALTON-PEEL OGS**

Four Corners Branch Library, 65 Queen St., Brampton @ 2p.m.

Call Ann Logan at 905-845-7755

March 22 - **Elise Cole**, professional librarian

April 26 - **Carolyn Bart-Riedstra**

*Organizing and Archiving Your Family Papers* (held in Oakville).

May 24 – Preparing for the Conference!

### **STREETSVILLE HIST. SOCIETY**

The Society meets the 2nd Thursday of the month (Feb, Apr, Oct, Dec), 8:00pm, at Streetsville Village Hall, 271 Queen Street South. Call Norm Potts at 905.858.0070.

The Society has launched a *Tweedsmuir History of Streetsville*, Volume 1.

Information at 905.542.1877

### **BRAMPTON HIST. SOCIETY**

The Society meets at Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, 25 Ruth Ave. at 7:15

March 19 –AGM & heritage update.

April 19 – Ray Charters of Charters Publishing.

May 21 - *Michael Seaman* Charles Henry Sheppard Estate and the Aurora Bunker.

### **MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Society meets at the Waldie Blacksmith Shop at 16 James Street at 8p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

March 19 “MARITIME HISTORY OF THE GREAT LAKES” with Walter Lewis

April 16 “A History of the Lorne Scots” with Rev. Ric Ruggle.

May 21 “Exploitation of the Dionne Quintuplets: A Canadian Tragedy” with Donnie Zaldin

June 18 –Annual pot luck dinner

### **NASAGIWEYA HIST. SOCIETY**

The Nasagiweya Historical Society meets the second Tuesday of each month at Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church in Haltonville at 7 p.m. President Audrey Allison 905-854-2378

### **OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

For further information visit

[www.oakvillehistory.org](http://www.oakvillehistory.org) and click on EVENTS or phone 905-844-2695

March 25 –AGM with potluck @6:30

May 20 – “Bring On The Bloomers (the liberation of women during Victorian Times)” with Ken Weber @7:30

Both events are at 69 Dunn Street, Oakville

### **TRAFALGAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

<http://www.trafalgartownshiphistory.ca>



## 2008 ARCHIVAL REPORT

John Mark Rowe, Archivist

### ARCHIVAL ACTIVITIES

In spite of not being able to secure a summer student this year, the work of the EHS Archives continued throughout the year. The Archival finding aid has been completely updated by our dedicated volunteers. We currently have the Table of Contents on our website. Our slide collection, which included photographs taken with slide film, has now been integrated into our photo collection. It resides in the 18000s.

We have been working on the *Acton Free Press* negatives. We have completed almost 12 000 descriptions so far. They are organized chronologically according to publication date of the newspaper. This will make them easier to locate. Whenever a print or scan copy of the negatives is made, it will receive a photo number.

The two largest donations this year came from The Georgetown Choral Society and from Robert Little School in Acton. We discovered a long photograph of a group of Police Chiefs in behind an old framed photo of the early businessman's picnic at Eldorado Park! We also received a photograph of the Georgetown Victoria's football (soccer) team taken about 1910. We didn't even know the team existed! One donation we'd like more of was three copies of Georgetown's 1953 Coronation Parade. These are the only photographs we have of this event.

Georgetown Schools received a complimentary copy of the EHS PowerPoint presentation on the history of Georgetown by J. M. Rowe. We also continued our preparations to microfilm the *Georgetown Leader* newspaper from the 1960s.

Our EHS volunteers spent quite some time helping people with genealogical inquiries this year. We thank all our volunteers. Perhaps you can offer a helping

hand this year. We appreciate it now and future generations of researchers will appreciate it long after you've forgotten about the donation.

### 2008 ACCESSIONS

The Archives had donations from Dave Carney, Stephen Blake, Dawn Livingstone, Mrs, Lillian Clayton, Roy Ballentine, Jean King, James Duff, Millie McNiven, John Sommer, *Georgetown*; Kathy Pyatt, *Thornbury*; Peter Kelly, *Guelph*; Steve McNamara, *Rockwood*; Karen Hunter, *Cheltenham*; Rob Burnett, *Esquesing*; Mike Harley, *Acton*; Gloria Beek, *Merrickville*; Lois McKinney, *Mississauga*; Mark Rowe, *Glen Williams*; Michael Adams, *Langley, BC*; Mrs. Pat Beer, *Port Hope*; National Archives of Canada, Upper Credit Humane Society, North Halton Golf & Country Club, Georgetown Choral Society, Halton Hills Public Library, Robert Little Public School, *Acton*.

### EXTENT OF HOLDINGS

Textual – General Collection:	45
linear metres	
Textual - Restricted Collection:	0.64
linear metres	
Textual - Newspaper Collections:	14
linear metres	
Cartographic Collection:	241
items	
Architectural Drawings:	136
sets	
Photograph Collection:	18 770
images (processed)	
Digital Images Collection:	15 000
images (processed) est.	
Audio-Visual Collection:	1
linear metre	
Negatives Collection:	23
linear metres (mostly un-processed)	

## Esquesing Historical Society

### Annual Financial Statement - January 31, 2009

#### Income

<b>Balance on Hand - January 31, 2008</b>		<b>\$15,583.21</b>
Ontario Heritage Development grant	\$911.00	
Membership fees	\$932.95	
Publication Sales	\$4,897.57	
Archive Sales	\$139.16	
Donations	\$114.00	
Royalties - Access, The Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency	\$273.00	<b><u>\$7,267.68</u></b>
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$22,850.89</b>

#### Expenses

Administration	\$433.41	
Newsletter	\$599.22	
Rent - Meeting Halls	\$550.00	
Honorarium - Speakers	\$250.00	
Membership fee - Ontario Historical Society	\$50.00	
Entrance fee	\$60.00	
Publications purchased for Resale	\$30.00	
Advertising	\$193.85	
Archives - Supplies	\$245.62	
- Other	\$114.17	
Bank fees	<u>\$0.32</u>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b><u>\$2,526.59</u></b>
<b>Balance on Hand - January 31, 2009</b>		<b><u><u>\$20,324.30</u></u></b>

Treasurer - Karen Hunter



**Map of Canada by Samuel de Champlain showing Lakes Ontario, Erie and Huron.**

By this time [1701], the Iroquois villages had begun to disappear from the north shore of Lake Ontario, and Algonkian allies of the French (especially the Mississauga and Ojibway or Chippewa) had begun to move into southern Ontario. During the 1720's, as Innis points

out, "Ontario was being hammered by French policy into a fortified unit, guaranteeing control for the lower St. Lawrence." A three-storey stone fort was erected on the east bank of the Niagara River at the edge of Lake Ontario. A small trading post was established on Lake Ontario at the southern end of the Toronto passage as "a dependancy of Niagara."

*-Ontario 1610-1985 A Political and Economic History, Randall White*

In 1805 the Mississaugas gave up a border along the front of Lake Ontario, where Mississauga, Oakville and Burlington are now, reserving some fishing rights and lands adjacent to the rivers themselves.

Then in Toronto township on 28 October, 1818, the Chiefs and representatives of the Otter and Eagle Tribes, the "Principle Men of the Mississauga Nation" put their totems on Treaty No. 19, granting the Crown a large tract in the Home District in return for an annual grant of £522/10/-.

Within a few months, three of the townships in the Mississauga Tract were under survey, and the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, decided the following names should be given to them: "Nasagiweya...Esquesing...Chinguacousy Being the Indian names of the principal Rivers in each respectively."

The Indian names for the rivers from Niagara to the Trent had been listed and translated almost a quarter of a century earlier by the surveyor, Augustus Jones (1763-1836).

Jones, who had married the daughter of a Mississauga chief (their son Peter would gain fame as a Methodist missionary to the Indians at the mouth of the Credit), showed two rivers on the map bearing the name Esquesink - one on the south shore of the lake and the other on the north shore - and gave its meaning as the "Last Creek in going Down l(ake)" or the last one out.

A later tradition, hallowed in the 1877 Halton County Atlas, translated the Indian words as "land of the tall pines"....

Most of the Indians returned to the Bruce peninsula and to Manitoulin Island, and the settlers who began to enter Esquesing would rarely encounter any of its previous inhabitants.

*-"The Indians of Esquesing", Rev. Richard Ruggle, The Herald, 19 September, 1984*



# Mackenzie-era papers up for auction

## Paisley-area man joined reformer's short-lived 1837 rebellion

January 03, 2009

**BRENT DAVIS**  
RECORD STAFF

### ELMIRA

John Stewart's life in 19th-century Ontario was, for the most part, a quiet one.

Except for the time he tried to overthrow the government.

Now, a bit of light is being shed on this little-known figure as a local auctioneer prepares to offer a collection of Stewart family documents and photographs.

"This is so rare," said Al Jones, who runs Al's Antique Auctions in Elmira. "This is Canadian history."

A seller in Hanover obtained the documents from the Stewart family estate in Paisley, Ont., and provided them to Jones on consignment.

A Scot who became a farmer in his adopted home of Upper Canada in the early 1800s, Stewart befriended William Lyon Mackenzie and joined his short-lived rebellion in 1837.

Opposed to the government of the day's land-granting and educational policies, some of the more extreme elements in the political reform movement flocked to journalist and politician Mackenzie.

As a larger rebellion raged in Lower Canada (now Quebec), Mackenzie's ragtag group of armed supporters took to Toronto's Yonge Street in December 1837, where they were dispersed by loyalists in a series of skirmishes.

According to one account, Mackenzie asked for Stewart's help at the height of the revolt, but by the time he and 60 men arrived, the rebels were already on the run.

Arrested along with dozens of others, Stewart escaped from imprisonment in Kingston's Fort Henry and fled to the United States.

An online biography prepared by the Bruce County Museum and Archives says Stewart was ultimately pardoned by Queen Victoria and returned to Canada. He eventually settled in Paisley, where he purchased the Paisley Agricultural Works farm implements factory.



The collection that will be auctioned Jan. 25 at the Aberfoyle Community Centre includes a leather-bound photo album with vintage portraits of a bearded Stewart -- identified, as "The Rebel" below his image - and several family members.

Another binder contains handwritten letters, many dating from the 1830s and 1840s, and fragile newspaper clippings. Bearing traces of their original wax seals, some of the letters were written by family members and friends and sent to Stewart while he remained a fugitive in New York state.

One update, sent to Stewart in 1839, speaks of continued political strife in Upper Canada. "I expect you have heard that there is another governor coming to this country," the letter says. "We may have governor after governor but they will do little good and never will redress the greavance (sic) of the people."

Among the items is Stewart's obituary, posted in the July 27, 1893, edition of the Paisley Advocate.

"John Stewart was not a disloyal man," the article states, "but he was too much a freeman to tamely submit to the oppression of the oligarchy of the period."

Jones plans to sell the documents as a complete collection, and has yet to determine a reserve bid amount.

He's hoping someone recognizes their historical value and steps up to purchase the items for donation to a museum.

"This is too important to let it go into private hands," Jones said.

[bdavis@therecord.com](mailto:bdavis@therecord.com)

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Kitchener Record <http://news.therecord.com/article/466620>



## **John Stewart jr.: The Adventures of an Esquesing Rebel in 1837-38**

Robert Burnett, editor

The full text of the adventures of John Stewart was published in the *Georgetown Independent* in 1983-1984 in three instalments. The Esquesing Historical Society published the entire interview in 1995 in *Collections 3*. Copies of *collections 3* are available in the Georgetown branch of the Halton Hills Libraries. A limited number are available from the EHS for \$5.

John Stewart lived at "Craiglea" on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Line, south of 10 Sideroad in Esquesing. The house still stands and is a designated historical building by Heritage Halton Hills.